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[This page and the next are facsimiles of the earliest catalogue of
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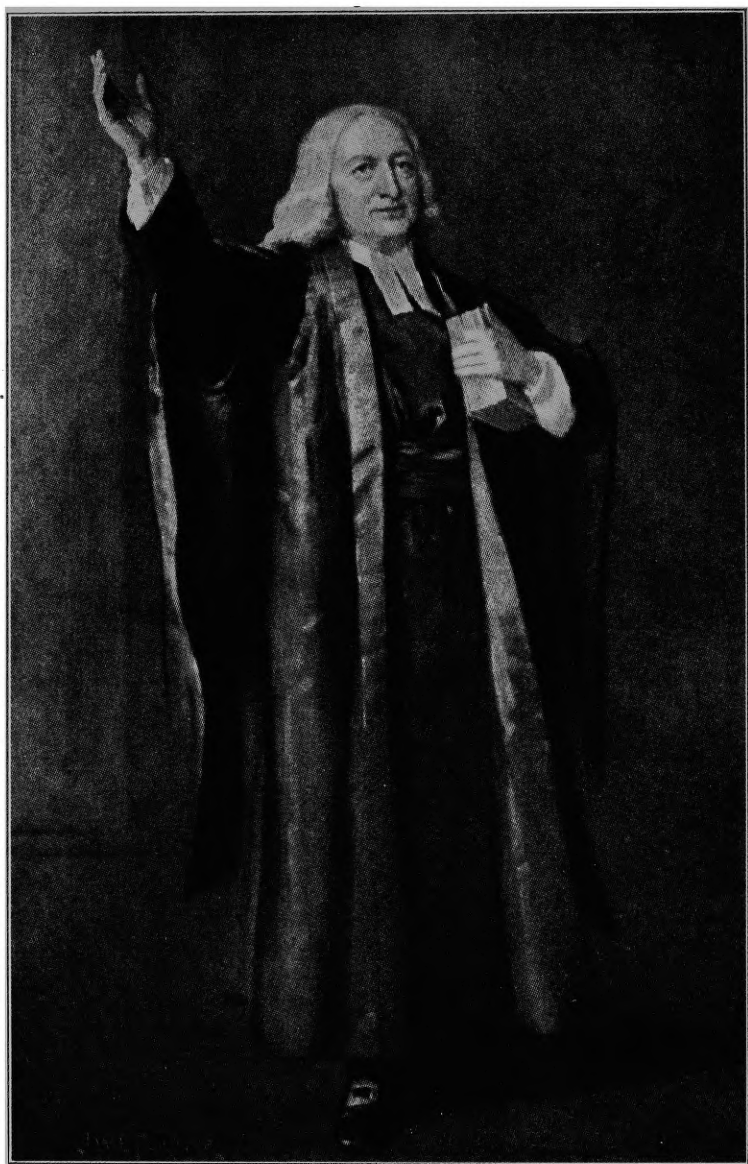
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Minutes of the Methodist Conferences, annually held in America, from the year 1773 to 1794 inclusive, bound, 3s. 9d.

The same, for several late years, separately, 5½d. each.

 As the Profits of these Books are for the general Benefit of the Methodist Societies, it is humbly recommended to the Members of the said Societies, that they will purchase no Books which we publish, of any other person than the afore said JOHN DICKENS, or the Methodist Ministers and Preachers in the several Circuits, or such Persons as sell them by their Consent.

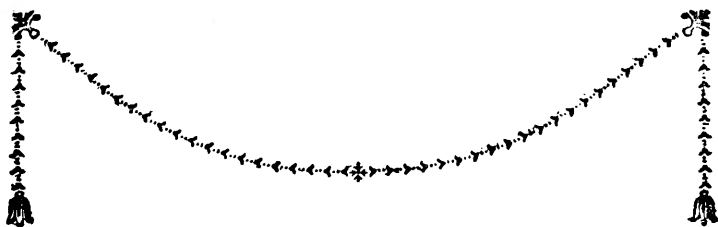


THE REV. JOHN WESLEY, A.M.

From the painting by J. W. L. Forster.

T H E
M A K I N G
OF THE
B O O K C O N C E R N
1789—1915

BY
JAMES RICHARD JOY, A.M.



THE METHODIST BOOK CONCERN

NEW YORK
BOSTON

CINCINNATI
PITTSBURGH

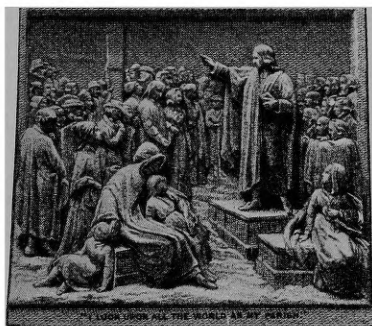
CHICAGO
DETROIT

KANSAS CITY

SAN FRANCISCO

M C M X V

I
LOOK UPON
ALL THE
WORLD
AS MY
PARISH



GOD
BURIES HIS
WORKMEN
BUT
CARRIES ON
HIS WORK

Wesley Tablet, Westminster Abbey

THE MAKING OF THE BOOK CONCERN, 1789-1915

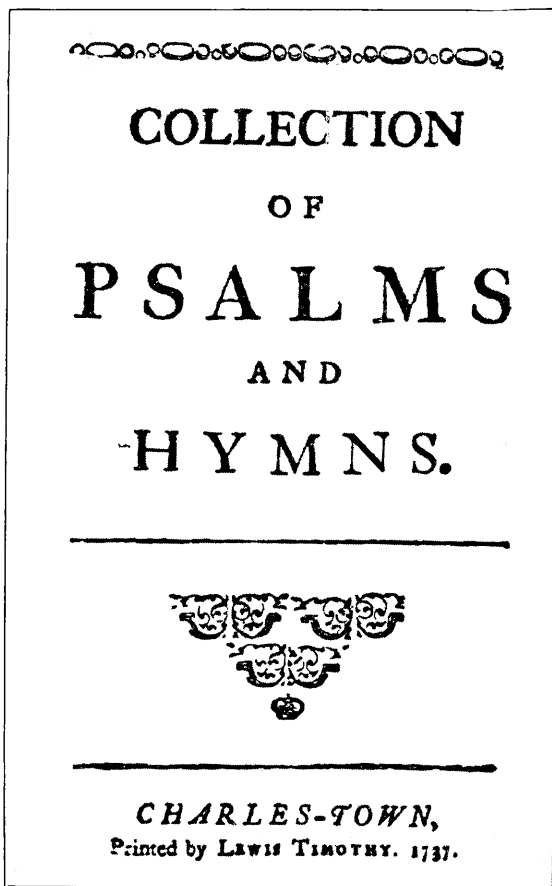
THE people called Methodists were concerned about Books and Reading from the very start, and now there is no land to which the myriad children of John Wesley have spread where they have not immediately set up some sort of a printing business, opened some sort of a "Book Room" as their first institution after the preaching place and school, and begun to publish a periodical, usually under the name of Methodist Magazine or Christian Advocate.

THERE WAS A MAN SENT FROM GOD WHOSE
NAME WAS JOHN

John Wesley was the father of it. It might almost be said to have been bred in his bone. His father, Samuel, before him was a writer of books of erudite prose and stately verse, which were published in ponderous and costly tomes,

THE MAKING OF THE BOOK CONCERN

dedicated to royalty, with subscribers among the nobility and higher clergy—and readers not many,



THE FIRST OF WESLEY'S HYMNALS
Printed in South Carolina, 1737.

it must be confessed. His elder brother, Samuel, Jr., wrote also, and printed, and there can be no doubt that little John knew the smell of printers'

THE MAKING OF THE BOOK CONCERN

ink and had watched the rector of Epworth bending over his proof-sheets and fondling the first copies of his own darling "works."

In his college days as a tutor at Oxford (1733) John began to print, publishing on his own account an interesting little volume entitled "A Collection of Forms of Prayer for Every Day in the Week." Two years later (1735) he abridged a translation of Thomas à Kempis's Imitation of Christ, and brought it out in two editions under the title "The Christian's Pattern" — a book which, curiously enough, half a century later, was to be the first to bear the imprint of the Methodist

Church in America; and in his brief and stormy residence in the Georgia Colony as a missionary he put through the press at Charleston a "Collection of Psalms and Hymns" (1737).

40

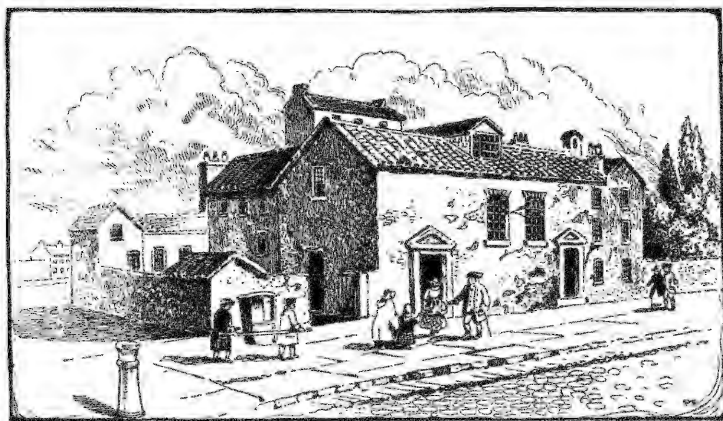
Of the Death of Christ.

Spoken preservation whereof God required of them, in order to their happiness; ~~and upon the performance whereof it was by him pre-
scribed unto them.~~ This is the sense and Doctrine of our Brethren themselves (generally.) So that in case it be supposed, that the Universality (in a manner, and a small remnant only excepted) of mankind, notwithstanding any ~~grace or benefit~~ received by the second Adam, ~~in, or through his death,~~ is in an absolute and utter incapacity; yea ~~lyeth under an impossibility~~ of escaping eternal misery ~~and torment~~, evident it is, that their condition was incomparably better in the first, than it is in, or by, the second Adam. But how ~~unsatisfactory~~ such a notion or supposition ~~as this is~~ with the ~~truth, the course and current of~~ the Scriptures, where ever they speak of the transcendent Grace of God vouchsafed in Jesus Christ unto the World, ~~which is the~~ great Subject or Argument of their delight, and in the exaltation whereof from place to place ~~they triumph, do~~ abundantly testify. Doubtless, the Tabernacle of Adam being fallen, and raised up again by Jesus Christ, is in so much the better condition ~~by means of this raising up, above what it was~~ before it fell, as the earthly Tabernacle of the bodies of the Saints will be, by being raised up from the dead, above what ~~their state and condition was~~ before they died. This Argument also is further cleared, and vindicated against ~~Objections~~, in the foregoing named

HOW JOHN WESLEY MARKED HIS PROOFS

Reduced facsimile with Wesley's marks.

THE MAKING OF THE BOOK CONCERN



THE FIRST METHODIST "BOOK ROOM"

Wesley's Foundery Chapel, London, 1739.

It was shortly after his return to England that he underwent that spiritual awakening which gave him his motive and his dynamic for his life mission "to spread Scriptural holiness through the lands."

John Wesley was called a crazy enthusiast, but never was a religious leader so sanely practical. His system of traveling preachers serving several points on a circuit revolutionized evangelism and made it possible for a few ministers to reach more people than ever before since the disciples "went everywhere." But when he ordained the printing press as an auxiliary preacher he increased the effectiveness and reach of the message a thousand-fold. His *Sermons and Notes on the New Testament*, his *Journals*, and the doctrinal books of Fletcher furnished his preachers with material for sermon and argument as well as models of diction, and the *Annual Minutes of Conference* gave them

THE MAKING OF THE BOOK CONCERN

accurate knowledge of the work and its economy. By the excellence of his hymns and tunes he altered the character of Protestant services the world over, and made a hymn book an indispensable part of the churchgoer's equipment. For the chap-books and ballads hawked about the country, and hitherto almost the sole reading of the common people, he substituted inexpensive and interesting and improving leaflets, tracts, booklets, etc., which eventually became a great body of popular literature, to which he contributed



THE WESLEYAN BOOK ROOM, CITY ROAD, LONDON

THE MAKING OF THE BOOK CONCERN



WESLEY MADE THE METHODISTS "A READING PEOPLE"

THE MAKING OF THE BOOK CONCERN

with his own never-resting pen no less than four hundred separate publications!

At first Wesley published through London or provincial booksellers, but in 1739, when the first Methodist preaching place was acquired in London, in the shape of the abandoned cannon Foundry in the Moorfields, a room at the southern end, twenty feet by eighty feet, was set off as a "Book Room," a name which has since become a Methodist classic. For thirteen years he was his own Book Steward, but in 1753 relinquished the detail of the business to others, though "the circulation of the books" was always upon his heart and constantly kept before preachers and members of society. An accounting of the book business in 1773 showed an inventory of nearly £15,000. When the new chapel was built in City Road, in 1778, the Book Room was removed thither, and has never left the neighborhood, where it still occupies spacious and well-appointed quarters adjoining Wesley's chapel and residence.

Incidentally, with the growth of sales the profits from the books furnished Wesley with a steadily increasing fund, which from the first was applied to the extension of Methodist work or to the relief of disabled workers. "I save all I can, and give all I can—that is all I have," was John Wesley's motto when he was still in his own person the "Book Concern of Methodism."

All honor then to John Wesley, first of all, who by popularizing religious literature made the Methodists "a reading people," and led the way to the successful denominational publishing houses of our own time.



HOW THE BOOK BUSINESS CAME OVERSEAS

Naturally the English Wesleyans who came to sow seed in the New World tried to fertilize it with printer's ink. Preachers like Robert Williams began to reprint and circulate the Methodist literature even before the first American Conference, in 1773, made "the books" one of the subjects of discussion. The Methodist Episcopal Church was organized, in 1784, at the Christmas Conference in Baltimore. In 1787 measures were taken by Conference to control the printing and the profits for denominational purposes. But it was not until 1789 that The Methodist Book Concern began its organized existence, which has now continued without interruption for over a century and a quarter.

THE MAKING OF THE BOOK CONCERN

THE HOUSE THAT ANOTHER JOHN BUILT

The Conference was held in May of that year, in Wesley Chapel (John Street Church), in New York City. The denomination, then in its fifth year, had 58,000 members (about one third as many as the net annual increase in recent years). Coke and Asbury were its Bishops, and in the old country John Wesley had not as yet "ceased at once to work and live." The Conference voted to enter the publishing business, and the Bishops, after some search, found in one of the preachers, an Englishman named John Dickins, a man who was willing to take the appointment of "Book Steward," and—what was even more essential—to devote his own meager savings of £120 to be used as the working capital. If any profits should accrue they were to go to pay off the college debt

Jn. Dickins

—for struggling little Cokesbury College at Abingdon, Md., was their nightmare—and anything more was to swell the missionary funds.

Mr. Dickins, a college-bred preacher (from the English Eton) with a turn for business, was also appointed pastor of the society in Philadelphia, and there he set up his shop, on August 17, 1789, at 43 Fourth Street, between Race and Arch. The first publication was a reprint of Wesley's edition of "The Christian's Pattern" (à Kempis's "Imita-

THE MAKING OF THE BOOK CONCERN



THE CONCERN'S FIRST BOOK

tion of Christ"). The printing and binding were done by contract, "Prichard & Hall" on Market Street being the first printers. There are early signs that the little capital was being turned over

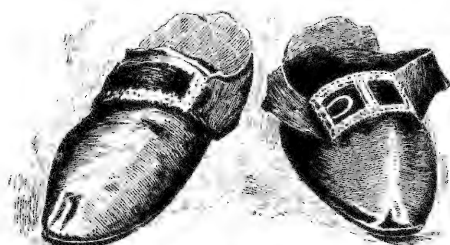
THE MAKING OF THE BOOK CONCERN

to good effect. In 1792 the Conference appropriated "profits" to several good objects, and in the same year took the following action:

"Question 1. What allowance shall be paid to the Book Steward annually for his services.

"Answer 1. \$200 for dwelling house and book-room. 2. \$80 for a boy. 3. \$53.½ for firewood. 4. \$333 to clothe and feed himself, his wife, and children; in all, \$666 and one-third dollars."

It was with such encouragement as this that the first Book Steward struggled on, preparing the copy, reading the proof, managing the sales, keeping the accounts, and, with the help of the "boy," attending to the shipping. He got out *A Pocket Hymn-Book* (3s. 9d.), a *Discipline*, *Baxter's Saints' Everlasting Rest* (well bound, 5s. 7½d.), *Wesley's Primitive Physic*, and the *Arminian Magazine*. In nine years (1789-98), when the yellow fever suddenly snatched him away in the midst of his labors, he had demonstrated the right of the Book Concern to live and serve the Church, and had set an example of industry and intelligent devotion to the business that few have surpassed.



JOHN WESLEY'S SHOES

GOD BURIES HIS WORKMEN, BUT CARRIES ON HIS WORK

If John Dickins, brave and self-sacrificing, was the founder, Ezekiel Cooper, whom Asbury begged to take the stewardship, was the second founder. He was elected in 1799 with but two dissenting votes, one of which he himself gave! He fairly leads the line of the "great" Book Agents. He found the business at loose ends in the interregnum after Dickins's death, but his energy and enterprise soon had it going on a far better basis. The assets, which in 1804 were \$27,000, had risen to \$45,000 four years later. He found Philadelphia tired of the Book Concern and Baltimore inhospitable, and was not disappointed when the General Conference of 1804 voted to remove it to New York.

In New York the Concern has had many homes in its one hundred and eleven years of activity. It began in a single room in Gold Street, shifting to Pearl, to Church, to Elm, where it achieved the prestige of two rooms, to Chatham Square, to Fulton. It was in New York twenty-one years before it owned the roof over its head. Cooper having set the business on its feet, voluntarily retired in 1808. Twelve years later another of the "great" agents was elected, Nathan Bangs, whose energy, initiative, learning, and mental power left their impress on everything which they touched in a long and fruitful life. When chosen, in 1820, he found the business encumbered by debt and embarrassed by an out-of-date system. It might be

THE MAKING OF THE BOOK CONCERN

said of him that "he found it brick and left it marble." Under his leadership the Concern began to manufacture the books which it distributed, first, in 1821, opening a bindery in the Wesleyan Academy building, 14 Crosby Street, and in 1824



EZEKIEL COOPER



NATHAN BANGS

Two of the "Great" Publishing Agents.

starting a printing office. In 1825 the Academy building was purchased and occupied—a great step forward. The next year another stride was taken when, on September 9, 1826, *The Christian Advocate*, the first newspaper authorized by the General Conference, began the career which is now completing its ninetieth year.



MARTIN RUTER

First Western Publishing Agent.

THE WINNING OF THE WEST

The insistent call of the West for a better service of "the books" compelled the General Conference of 1820 to establish a branch at Cincinnati. The valleys of the Ohio and Mississippi were filling up with emigrants, to whom the Methodist circuit riders were bringing the Gospel more effectively than any other "Home Missionary" society. There were no railroads, and

transportation of printed stock by wagon, canal, and river was too slow. Moreover, the lack of banking facilities made it almost impossible for a New York house to continue to be a distributing center for the new empire west of the mountains. Accordingly, the Rev. Martin Ruter was commissioned "Assistant Agent" in 1820 and sent to Cincinnati, where he established a Methodist Book Room in an apartment 15 ft.x20 ft. at Elm and Fifth Streets in the Metropolis of the New West. Like John Dickins, he seems to have had to do all the work himself, not even having an allowance for "a boy," and, like Dickins again, he laid a good foundation for those who were to come after. He was a man of superior education as well as busi-

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ness talent, and capable of writing books as well as selling those of others.

When the romantic history of the Western Circuit Rider shall be adequately written The Methodist Book Concern will come in for a great share in the Winning of the West for civilization.

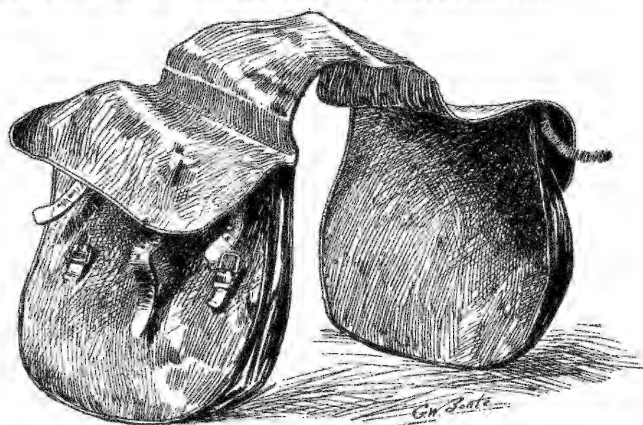


A WESTERN CIRCUIT RIDER

When cities were far, posts rare, and libraries unknown the preacher's saddlebags brought good books into every community. *The Western Christian Advocate* since 1834 has paid weekly visits to thousands of Methodist homes, and since 1839 the German weekly, *Der Christliche Apologete*,

THE MAKING OF THE BOOK CONCERN

has issued from the same presses. A monthly illustrated literary magazine, *The Ladies' Repository and Gatherings of the West*, was for forty years (1841-1880) a veritable journal of civilization throughout the Mississippi Valley. *The Pittsburgh Christian Advocate* was adopted 1840. *The Northwestern Christian Advocate*, Chicago, dates from 1852; *The Central Christian Advocate* (Saint Louis and later Kansas City) from 1856. Beyond the Rockies the Book Concern has *The California Christian Advocate* (San Francisco, 1852) and *The Pacific Christian Advocate* (Portland, 1856). *The Methodist Advocate-Journal*, at Athens, Tenn., and *The Southwestern Christian Advocate*, at New Orleans, La., complete the present roster of the official "Advocate" family. Through these and other periodicals the Church has kept pace with the population, and has not only helped to spread scriptural holiness over the land, but has contributed enormously to the formation of the institutions and laws of these commonwealths.

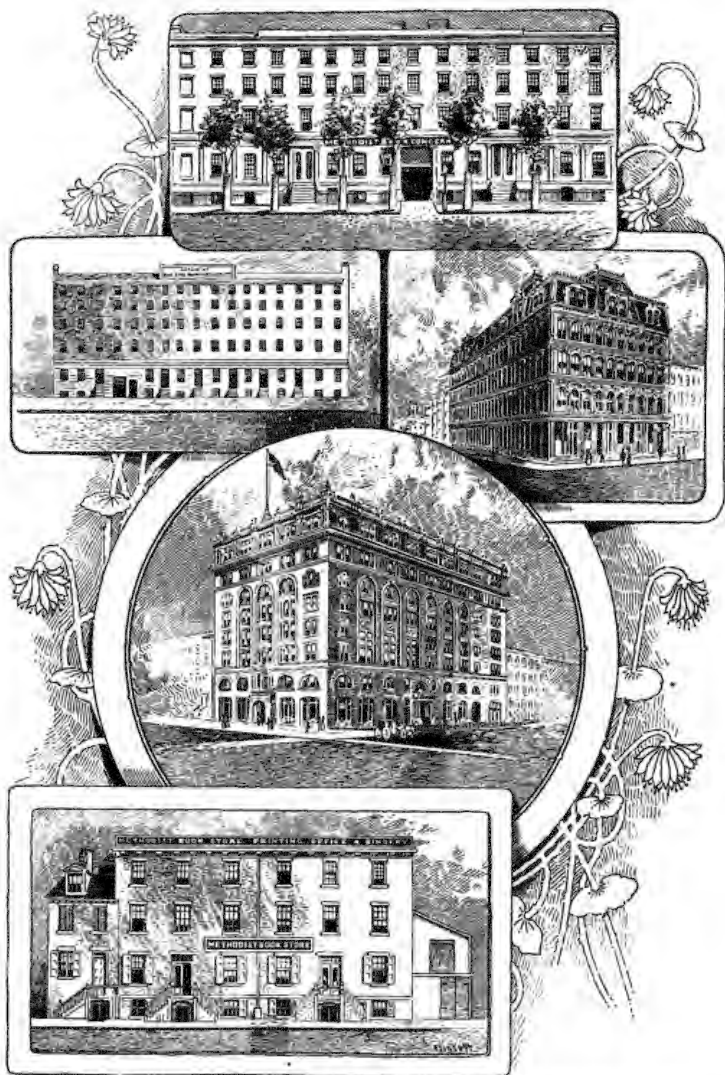


THE SADDLEBAGS OF FREEBORN GARRETTSON

THE BUILDING ERA EAST AND WEST

The business in New York had reached the building stage, and in 1833 a factory, warerooms, and offices were erected on five lots which had been purchased in Mulberry Street. They were occupied in September, but on February 18, 1836, were burned to the ground with all their contents—a loss of \$250,000. A charred leaf from the burning buildings was wafted over the East River and picked up in Brooklyn. On it were still legible the words of Isaiah 64. 11, “Our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burned up with fire; and all our pleasant things are laid waste.” New buildings, much better than their predecessors, quickly arose on the Mulberry Street site, and there the “Eastern House” conducted all its business until 1869 and continued to manufacture until 1890. In the former year the offices and salesrooms were removed to 805 Broadway, at Eleventh Street, and in 1889, the centenary of the Book Concern, the eight-story structure at 150 Fifth Avenue, corner of Twentieth Street, was dedicated. Here the business of the Eastern House has since been carried on. The same building houses the Board of Foreign Missions and the Board of Education. The land was purchased in 1887 for \$450,000, and the plot has since been enlarged by the purchase of lots on Twentieth Street. In 1911, three additional stories were added. The value of the real estate in New York is about \$825,000.

The Cincinnati house has had a similar property evolution. In 1828 it moved from the rented room at Fifth and Elm to a house on George, near



HOMES OF THE METHODIST BOOK CONCERN IN
NEW YORK, 1824-1915

(Center) The building at 150 Fifth Ave. (built 1889. Enlarged 1899) before the recent addition. (Below) Wesleyan Academy building, 1824-33. (Above, left) First Mulberry St. House, occupied 1833-36. (Top) Mulberry St. House, occupied 1836-1890. (Right) Store and office, 805 Broadway, 1869-89.

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Race, and a little later to Walnut, between Third and Fourth. In 1834 it occupied a house on Main Street, above Fifth, and it was here that the first number of *The Western Christian Advocate* was issued in 1834. In 1839 lots were bought at Eighth and Main Streets, where buildings were erected on the site of the mansion of General Arthur St. Clair, which sufficed until 1870. Then a new plant was established at Fourth, Home, and Plum. This was extended to the corner in 1893, the new building being dedicated the following year, and is now making way for a modern six-story ferro-concrete factory and wareroom which, when completed, will be one of the best appointed publishing houses in the land.

In addition to the main houses at New York and Cincinnati, the Book Concern has Depositories at Chicago, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, Kansas City, Detroit, and Boston. The property interests at the three places first named are large, including fine modern buildings at San Francisco and Pittsburgh and a new site in Chicago which will soon be adequately improved. In all the real estate investments of the Concern in 1913 were valued at \$1,588,315.

THE LEAVES OF THE TREE

BOOKS

The first catalogue of the Book Concern, published in the collected minutes of 1795, and reproduced on the first leaves of this brochure, was a fairly prophetic epitome of the literature that was to come. Let us glance thoughtfully on some of the twenty-five publications therein listed: *Wesley's Notes* was a commentary, the forerunner of Clarke's and Whedon's which have since given substance to millions of sermons. *The Arminian Magazine* stands for the periodical literature in immense variety which has steadily come from the Methodist press. *Thomas à Kempis* stands for the devotional literature which has enriched the spiritual life of five generations. *The Discipline* is never "out of print." *The Experience and Travels of Mr. Freeborn Garrettson*, the vivacious *Journals* of Wesley, and those of the grimly earnest Asbury are the first outcroppings of the rich vein of denominational biography and history, culminating in the later *Histories of Methodism* by Nathan Bangs, Abel Stevens, and Bishop Hurst. The volume of *Sermons* initiated another fruitful department, and *The Excellent Works* of the Rev. Mr. John Fletcher, are the worthy ancestors of a long shelf of doctrinal treatises. The *Catechism* and the *Minutes* already have found their permanent place in the catalogue. There is literature for young people also, and *Children's Instructions* is the forerunner of the vast later literature of the Sunday school. From that six-penny *Tract on*

THE MAKING OF THE BOOK CONCERN

Slavery, it is not such a long look ahead to the group of books on moral and social reform which have helped to form the sentiment of the church on slavery, temperance, and the whole sphere of human betterment. *The Family Adviser and Primitive Physic* dimly suggests a group of later volumes on popular science. Finally we have *A Pocket Hymnal*, the pioneer of the eight official hymnals of American Methodism, which have nearly reached perfection in the superb *Methodist Hymnal* now used by millions of Methodist worshipers in the Sabbath service of song.

PERIODICALS

John Wesley in 1778, being then 75 years

T H E Arminian Magazine, N U M B E R I. For JANUARY 1778.

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L O N D O N :

Printed by J. FRY and Co. and Sold at the Foundery, near Upper-Moulfield
[PRICE SIX-PENCE.]

THE FIRST METHODIST PERIODICAL
Edited by John Wesley.

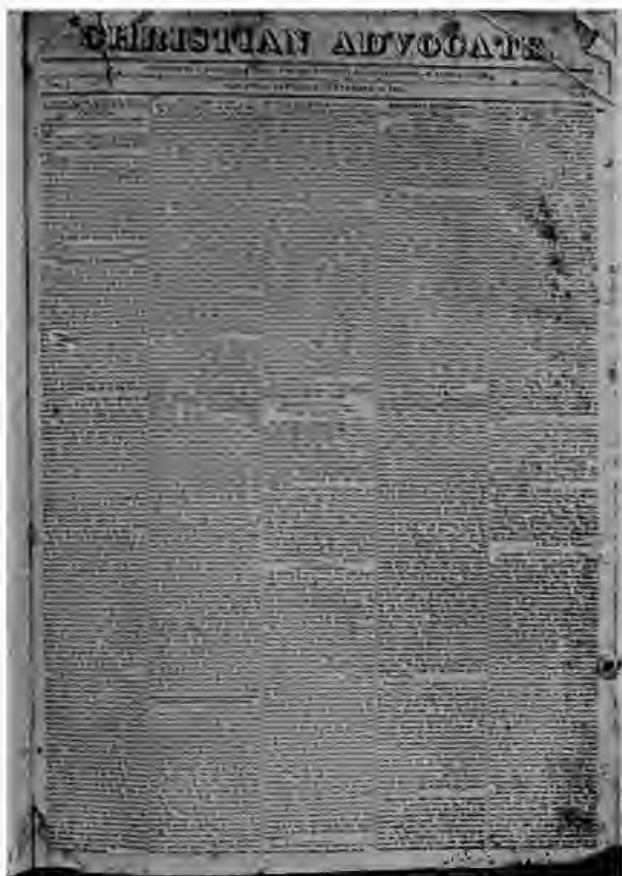
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of age, drew up the Prospectus or as he called it, "Proposals," for an 80-page monthly, *The Arminian Magazine*, which "will contain no news, no politics, no personal invectives, nothing offensive either to religion, decency, good-nature, or good manners." Its object was to spread the good news of a loving God's "willingness to save *all men from all sin*." Under a changed name "the magazine" continues to this day, and perhaps outranks in age any other. John Dickins began an American issue of *The Arminian Magazine* in 1789, but it was discontinued after two years. *The Methodist Magazine*, 1797, 1798, was no more successful, but its resumption was ordered in 1816 and it reappeared as a monthly, 1818 to 1827; from 1828 to 1839 it was *The Methodist Magazine and Quarterly Review*, shortened in 1840 to *Methodist Quarterly Review*, and in 1898 to *The Methodist Review*. Nathan Bangs (1832-36), Samuel Luckey (1836-40), George Peck (1840-48), John McClintock (1848-56), D. D. Whedon (1856-84), Daniel Curry (1884-87), Daniel Wise (1887-88), J. W. Mendenhall (1888-92), and W. V. Kelley (1893-) have been its editors. Of more popular design was *The National Magazine* (1853-59), to which Abel Stevens (1853-56) and James Floy (1856-59) gave strong editorial direction. *Golden Hours* for young people was issued at Cincinnati (1868-80). The German family monthly, *Haus und Herd*, was issued in 1873. Its editors have been Henry Liebhart (1872-95), F. Nagler (1895-1900), F. Munz (1900-08), A. J. Bucher (1908-).

The first official newspaper, authorized by the General Conference and issued from the Book

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Concern, was the *Christian Advocate*, New York, September 9, 1826. It was antedated a few years



THE FIRST NUMBER OF THE CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE,

SEPT. 9, 1826

Reduced Facsimile.

by independent papers: *Zion's Herald*, Boston,
and the *Missionary Journal*, Charleston, S. C.

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These were soon acquired and the paper was styled *The Christian Advocate and Journal* (1827, 1833-70), and *Christian Advocate and Journal and Zion's Herald* (1828-33). The "great official" has had twelve editors in its 90 years, and for more than one third of that period (1880-1912) was under the able direction of Dr. James M. Buckley. Equally "official" and not less influential in their respective sections are the other "Advocates," enumerated in a former chapter. Some of the most eminent names in Methodism appear in the roll of their editors.

In addition to the Sunday school periodicals, many attempts at a periodical for young people have been made, with *The Youth's Instructor*, 1823, *The Child's Magazine*, 1825, and *Our Youth*, 1885-90. *The Epworth Herald*, 1890, under the direction of Joseph F. Berry, and with the backing of the Epworth League, was the first to achieve large and lasting success.

No church has so numerous organs or so ably edited, and the aggregate circulation, though far below what it will be when the goal of "a church paper in every church household" is reached, is not less than 400,000. The best thought of the church is being given to the difficult problems created for the Advocate family by changed publishing conditions, and it is believed that the solution will eventually be found. Certainly there never was a period when the church in general stood in such need of the enlightened leadership of an able and fearless press, supplying information of the world-wide work of the church, advocating moral reforms, and proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.

THE MAKING OF THE BOOK CONCERN

SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPPLIES FOR THE MILLION

To a phase of religious work scarcely known in 1789 the Book Concern owes the most substantial share of its present success, while its great resources have for their part often enabled the Sunday school leaders of the world to introduce improvements in instruction otherwise impossible. The two weeklies, the *Sunday School Advocate*, begun in 1840, and *The Classmate* (1873), have circulations of 600,000 and 500,000 respectively. *The Sunday School Journal* (1860) circulates 200,000 monthly among the teachers. The International Lessons are treated in a vast variety of helps for every grade and specialized department. As John H. Vincent was the editorial and educational genius who brought the International "Berean Series" of Lessons to their best development, so John T. McFarland in a later day, by introducing the newer educational science, made possible the Graded Lessons. These, though used by many denominations, are all manufactured by The Methodist Book Concern.

The sales of Sunday school periodicals have for some years exceeded \$1,000,000 in annual value, and are increasing rapidly.

In this provision of instructive literature for the children and youth, and for Bible study generally, The Methodist Book Concern has abundantly justified its existence. A study of the figures of circulation in comparison with the enrollment in our Bible schools makes it apparent that the high excellence of the Methodist lesson helps has given them the preference as textbooks in hundreds of non-Methodist schools.

THE BOOK COMMITTEE AND PUBLISHING AGENTS

The Book Committee is almost as old as the Book Concern. John Dickins had been at work only three years when the General Conference of 1792 authorized the Philadelphia Conference to name a committee of its preachers to advise with him and to audit his accounts. When New York took over the business in 1804, the New York Conference ministers took up this duty, and when the Western branch was opened in 1820, the Ohio Conference began to perform the same function for the Cincinnati house. In 1848 the whole church was given a share in the oversight of the Concern by the election of an Eastern and a Western committee, the church being districted and one minister being selected by the General Conference on nomination of the delegates from each district. This went on for twenty years, when (1868) the two committees were made one. But this did not provide adequate supervision, and was modified by the next General Conference when the district members were supplemented by local committees at New York and Cincinnati. This was the first year of lay representation in the General Conference, and in these local committees the laymen first found seats on the Book Committee. They immediately proved their usefulness and their numbers have steadily increased. Men of the highest business and professional standing have counted it an honorable service to give generously of their time to these duties. The names of Clement Studebaker, James N. Gamble, R. T. Miller, Amos Shinkle, Clinton B. Fisk, John B. Cornell, Wil-



EMPLOYEES OF THE METHODIST BOOK CONCERN IN NEW YORK, 1914

Taken in the Chapel on the day when the policies of insurance were distributed.

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liam Hoyt, Judge E. L. Fancher, and Ezra B. Tuttle—to mention only a few of those no longer on the committee—suffice to indicate the esteem in which the office is held.

According to the Discipline of 1912, which gives the law of the Book Concern under the consolidation now happily consummated, the Book Committee consists of one member from each of the fifteen General Conference districts, and “local committees” of five members each at New York and Cincinnati.

Its duties and powers are in brief to examine the affairs of the Book Concern, and report to the Annual and General Conferences; to fix annually the salaries of Bishops, Publishing Agents, and official Editors, and determine the amount of the Correspondence Fund allowed to the official periodicals; to elect the Book Editor; to discontinue any depository or periodical and to order expenses curtailed in any department of the Concern; to select the place of meeting for the General Conference and provide for its entertainment; to fill vacancies in the publishing, editorial, or other official departments of the Book Concern. The local committees meet monthly, and have a joint session semiannually. Acting jointly they may suspend a Publishing Agent or an Editor.

The annual meeting of the Book Committee is held on the third Wednesday in April.

The Book Steward of John Dickins’s day, a busy pastor, who made the Book Concern his “side line,” long ago gave way to the Publishing Agent, devoting his entire time to the work. Eight men, Dickins, Cooper, John Wilson, Daniel



EMPLOYEES OF THE METHODIST BOOK CONCERN AT CINCINNATI

When the insurance policies were distributed.

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Hitt, Thomas Ware, Joshua Soule, Thomas Mason, and Peter P Sandford, had served before the Western Branch was established. Since that time there have been fifteen Publishing Agents (formerly styled "Book Agents") at New York, and the same number at Cincinnati. All but three—Phillips, Pye, and Graham—have been ministers.

The Western Methodist Book Concern received a separate charter in 1839, and for nearly three-quarters of a century maintained an independent existence, though the same Book Committee exercised supervision of both houses; but the inevitable rivalries and duplication of effort and the difficulty in the way of perfect cooperation led to increasing dissatisfaction. The General Conference of 1908 ordered that "The Methodist Book Concern in the City of New York" and "The Western Methodist Book Concern" be united in one act of incorporation as "The Methodist Book Concern." This was practically effected by the amendment of the two existing charters, and with the approval of this action by the General Conference of 1912 the unification became an accomplished fact.

Upon the unification of The Methodist Book Concern by the legislation of 1908 and 1912, the agents ceased to be classified as Eastern or Western, and were elected on one ticket, by the General Conference, the Book Committee proceeding to designate one of them as the General Agent, and assigning the others to the three chief seats of the business. Dr. Homer Eaton was the first to hold the title of General Agent, and upon his decease in 1913 Dr. H. C. Jennings succeeded him. The work is subdivided: Dr.



HENRY C. JENNINGS



GEORGE P. MAINS



JOHN H. RACE



EDWIN R. GRAHAM

THE PUBLISHING AGENTS, 1915

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Jennings having the Department of Accounts; Dr. George P. Mains, located at New York, being in charge of the Department of Advertising; Edwin R. Graham, at Chicago, having the Department of Sales, and Dr. John H. Race, with headquarters at Cincinnati, being especially charged with the Manufacturing operation. The new system, the fruit of years of toil on the part of the late Dr. R. T. Miller and his colleagues, has been crowned with success in the elimination of rivalry and the unification of effort all along the line.

One of the earliest acts under the unification program was the concentration of the manufacture of books in New York and of the Sunday School periodicals at the Cincinnati plant.

The manufacturing plants at Cincinnati and New York are equipped with approximately \$1,000,000 worth of presses and other machinery for printing and binding. Besides handling their own enormous output, they do a profitable job printing and binding business of over \$500,000 a year. Such is their reputation for good workmanship, that they have for years been employed by the Oxford University Press to manufacture the American editions of its famous line of Teachers' Bibles. The Cambridge University Press sought to have the India paper edition of the Encyclopædia Britannica printed and bound at the Methodist "factory" in New York, and the Book Concern did manufacture a considerable part of the edition. The presswork on the India paper edition and the binding of the finer edition have been especially admired.

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The Methodist Book Concern celebrated its one hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary in 1914 by insuring the lives of all its employees. This insurance became effective June 1 for the amount of one year's salary. It covers over one thousand men and women, aggregates more than \$1,000,000 of insurance, and the policy covers employees so long as they remain in the service of the Company. No medical examination is required.

The official announcement of the Publishing Agents to the employees closed as follows:

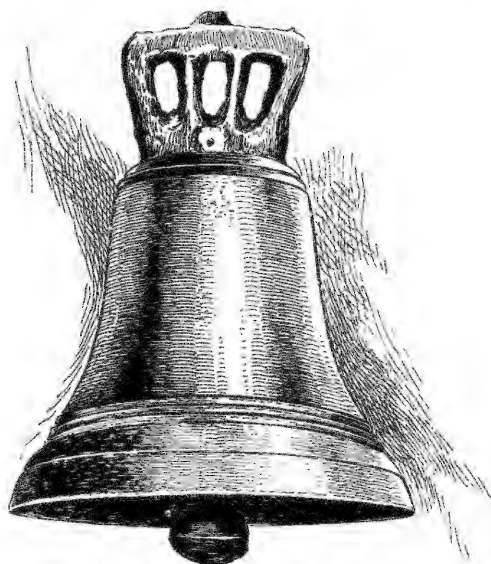
To the development of this institution five generations of workers have worthily contributed. Mindful of the mutuality of interest and of obligation that exists between employer and employee, The Methodist Book Concern in this, the year of its one hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary, and in grateful memory of those who have gone before, has decided to show its appreciation of those who now carry on its work by insuring the life of each of its employees.

The management takes pleasure in informing you that by arrangement with the Equitable Assurance Society your life is insured to the amount of your salary for one year. The maximum amount of any policy, however, is not to exceed the sum of \$2,400. Any employee receiving a salary in excess of \$2,400 may be included in the list of insured, but cannot receive a benefit beyond this sum. The limit of insurable age is sixty-three years. This policy holds good in each case only so long as the insured shall remain an employee of The Book Concern. It is planned to have the insurance payable in equal monthly installments covering the period of one year, the first payment at the time of death, and the remainder in successive monthly payments.

We experience a pleasurable satisfaction in the knowledge that we are the first publishing house in America to take advantage of the system of group insurance in the interests of our employees and fellow-workers.

We trust this insurance will add something to your feeling of security and protection, and also that of your beneficiaries. It is given to you in appreciation of your personal loyalty and of the good work you have done, and it goes to you absolutely gratuitously, with the compliments and good wishes of

THE METHODIST BOOK CONCERN.



THE ABINGDON BELL

From Cokesbury College, 1787.

IT BLESSES HIM THAT GIVES AND
HIM THAT TAKES

The prosperity of The Methodist Book Concern has been closely dependent upon the growth of the Church, and is due as much to the loyalty of the thousands of scattered preachers on small circuits as to any particular financial genius of this or that publishing agent at New York or Cincinnati. It is the "people's book concern," and, however magnificent its present capital and however imposing its buildings, it needs more than ever to retain the confidence and loyalty of preachers and church members. It would be a sad day if it should ever come to be regarded merely as a matter of merchandise, like any other

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book-selling business, and not an unexcelled instrument under God for the carrying out of His great designs, by spreading the knowledge of His truth by means of the printed page.

Nevertheless, the mere story of the dollar must be told in a historical sketch of an institution like this, and it reads like a romance.

John Dickins's private savings of \$600 went to pay for the printing of the first books. When he died in 1798 and the business fell away, Ezekiel Cooper found assets of about \$4,000, and debts of the same amount, for the Conference had been compelled to use up the profits year by year. His energetic administration soon cleared the debt, and in 1808 he turned over to his successor \$45,000 of assets. In 1824 the amount of net assets reported to the General Conference was \$221,000.

In 1832, when the claim of the Canada Conference, which had been set off as an independent Church, had to be met, the net assets East and West were \$413,566. In 1836 the net capital was \$281,650. When the "bisection" of the church made it necessary to part the assets with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, the latter organization received \$270,000 cash, besides other property, about one third of the total assets. In 1860 the net capital was \$540,721. In 1868 it had passed the million mark; eight years later it was a million and a half, and in 1889, the centenary year, had reached two millions and a half, with annual sales of \$2,000,000 and profits of \$225,000. Within the century the sales had amounted to \$50,000,000. There was ample warrant for the denominational pride, which found expression at the formal opening of the million-

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dollar plant in New York, February 11, 13, 1890. It was stated that up to that time the profits had amounted to \$4,000,000, of which one half had been distributed to needy preachers, and their dependent families, and perhaps as much more had gone out in general denominational expenses. In the quarter century which has since elapsed the growth has steadily continued, until by the latest showing of the Methodist Book Concern—no longer Eastern and Western, but one and indivisible—the capital is \$5,924,630; the annual sales \$2,666,955, with profits amounting in 1913 to \$397,762. In “saving all it can and giving all it can,” The Methodist Book Concern has been through all the years the embodiment of the practice of John Wesley, who first found the way of making the distribution of good books the basis of his generous philanthropies. Of every dollar that is paid into the Book Room for merchandise, a percentage comes back to the church, in the support of the ministers who have given their active years to its service.

Before the Book Concern was three years old, at a time when its profits had not yet repaid John Dickins his loan of \$600 for working capital, the hopeful General Conference of 1792 made arrangements for appropriating the “surplus.” In the early days—and some not so early—the “produce” of the business was drawn upon to meet many emergencies, such as debts on the schools, salaries of bishops, deficits of General Conferences, paying expenses of fraternal delegates, and General Conference Commissions, and a great variety of purposes not in accordance with the fundamental Sixth Restrictive Rule of the Discipline (Art. X.

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¶46, §6): “The General Conference shall not appropriate the produce of the Book Concern .to any purpose other than for the benefit of the Traveling, Supernumerary, and Superannuated [Retired] Preachers, their wives, widows, and children.”

As long as there have been any profits to divide, a chief application of them has been to the “distressed traveling preachers.” But it is only within the past thirty years that the matter has been systematized, and the annual distribution very largely augmented. Early in the nineteenth century each Annual Conference received \$400 annually. The total from 1836 to 1860 was \$305,457, an average of more than \$1,000 a month for twenty-five years. From 1860 to 1868 the average was but \$5,000 a year, and from that time until 1881 dividends seem to have lapsed altogether. In 1881 payments were resumed, \$15,000 being appropriated. In the quadrennium, 1884–88, the amount was \$78,000, and the centenary of 1889 was marked by a jubilee offering of \$100,000. The total for the past four years is \$1,079,283, and for the first quarter of the second century, \$2,824,283, an average of \$112,971 per year for twenty-five years.

In addition to the direct relief which The Methodist Book Concern has rendered to the retired ministers, it has been through all these years the servant of all the preachers, carrying them on credit, and granting them discount, while they on their part have been its steadiest customers and most faithful agents. Far hence be the day when the Methodist preacher shall look elsewhere for his books and periodicals than to the Book Room!

